Multiple job holding at record high in June quarter

Media Release

Released 8/09/2021

Source: Labour Account Australia, June 2021

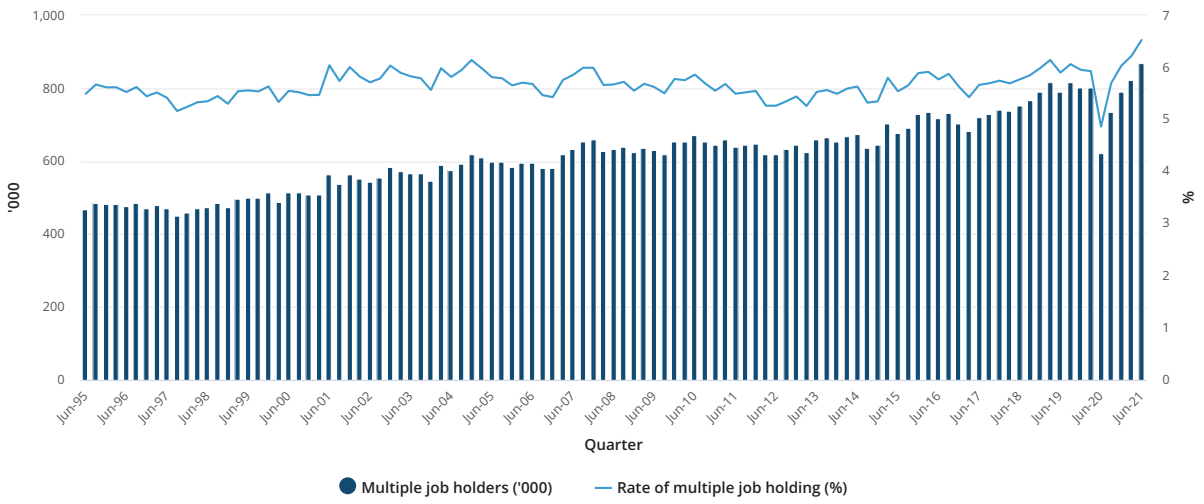
The proportion of employed people working more than one job increased to 6.5 per cent in the June quarter 2021, according to figures released today by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). This was 0.6 percentage points above the start of the pandemic and the highest since the series started in 1994.

Total jobs increased by 262,000 (1.8 per cent) in the June quarter, of which 167,000 were filled jobs and 95,000 were vacant jobs. This was prior to the recent lockdowns and other restrictions across large parts of Australia, and the 3.7 per cent reduction in payroll jobs through July (see Weekly Payroll Jobs and Wages (/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/weekly-payroll-jobs-and-wages-australia/latest-release)).

Multiple job holding

Bjorn Jarvis, head of Labour Statistics at the ABS, said: “The multiple job holding rate of 6.5 per cent in the June quarter was the highest seen across the 27 year series, and continued the rebound from the record low of 4.9 per cent in the June quarter of 2020."

Multiple job holders, Seasonally adjusted



The largest increases in the multiple job holding rate were in Administrative and support services, Arts and recreation services and Education and training. Across all industries, the rate of multiple job holding was higher than pre-pandemic levels.

“The growth in multiple job holding coincided with a faster increase in secondary jobs, which increased by 1.4 per cent during the June quarter, compared with 1.2 per cent for main jobs.” Mr Jarvis said.

“Secondary jobs increased by 33 per cent over the 2020-21 financial year, from a low in the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic in the June quarter of 2020. By June quarter 2021 they were 9 per cent above pre-pandemic levels.”

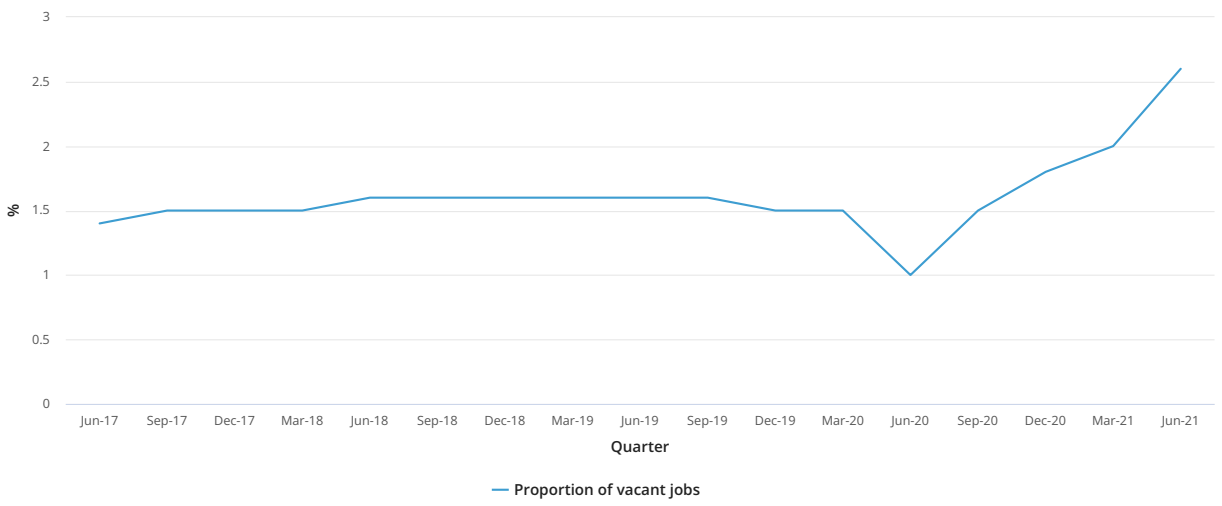
“However, analysis of both Labour Force Survey and Labour Account statistics suggests that while there are more multiple job holders, the average hours they work in their secondary jobs has decreased over the COVID period. Average hours worked by multiple job holders in their secondary jobs was 9.5 hours per week in June quarter 2019, 9.3 hours in June quarter 2020, and 9.1 hours in June quarter 2021.”

Proportion of vacant jobs

Prior to the pandemic, job vacancies accounted for around 1.5 per cent of all jobs. This fell to around 1.0 per cent in June quarter 2020, recovered to around 1.5 per cent in September quarter 2020, and has since risen to 2.6 per cent in June quarter 2021 (the highest in the Labour Account series).

“Job vacancies accounted for around 95,000 of the 262,000 increase in jobs in the June quarter 2021 – around 36 per cent. This proportionally large increase in job vacancies resulted in the proportion of vacant jobs rising sharply to 2.6 per cent, the highest recorded in the 27 years of the series.” Mr Jarvis said.

Proportion of vacant jobs, Seasonally adjusted



The proportion of vacant jobs was higher than pre-pandemic levels in all industries.

Hours worked

Hours worked increased by 1.8 per cent in the June quarter 2021, to surpass pre-pandemic levels for the first time. The strongest increases in hours worked were seen in Retail trade,

Construction and Accommodation and food services.

“By the June quarter 2021, hours worked were higher than pre-pandemic levels in 9 of the 19 industry divisions.” Mr Jarvis said.

Further information is available in Labour Account Australia (/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-account-australia/jun-2021) . Today’s release also includes an article containing Labour Account based estimates of status in employment by industry (/articles/status-employment-industry) .

Media notes

- The June quarter Labour Account coincided with a labour market which was less impacted by COVID-19 disruptions than earlier quarters, with lockdowns and other restrictions only seen during the last few weeks of the quarter.
- The Australian Labour Account complements other ABS labour market measures to build a more comprehensive picture of the labour market. The Labour Account provides the number of filled and unfilled jobs each quarter, while Weekly Payroll Jobs and Wages provides an index of the change in payroll jobs, Jobs in Australia provides all jobs held throughout the year, and Labour Force Survey provides the number of people employed each month.
- Data contained in this media release refer to seasonally adjusted estimates, with the exception of the hours worked in secondary jobs analysis which is derived from original estimates.
- The ABS has suspended publishing trend series for the COVID-19 period.
- When reporting ABS data, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (or ABS) must be attributed as the source.
- For media requests and interviews, contact the ABS Media team via media@abs.gov.au (mailto:media@abs.gov.au) (8.30 am - 5pm Mon-Fri AEDT).
- Subscribe to our media release notification service (https://www4.abs.gov.au/ausstats/notifications.NSF/Web+Pages/ABS+Email+Notification+Service?OpenDocument&js=enabled) to get notified of ABS media releases or publications upon their release.